

[20th October 1927]

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO:—"What arrangements has the Minister made for that consideration, may I know, Sir, whether he has appointed a committee or whether he is carrying on considerations in any other manner?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"I think, Sir, I said at the previous meeting of the Council that the Government were intending to depute the Principal of School of Indian Medicine to report to the Government about the action taken in other provinces in India and if this inspection is made and the report is received, the Government will then be in a position to consider the matter."

Alleged prohibition of parents from staying in the General Hospital during nights.

* 755 Q.—Mr. C. VENKATARAMAN NAYUDU: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state whether it is a fact that guardians or mothers of children even under three years of age admitted as in-patients into the General Hospital, Madras, are not allowed to stay with the children during nights and if so why?

A.—Mothers of breastfed infants are always admitted into the hospital. In other cases the mothers are only admitted when the children are placed on the 'seriously ill' list by the Medical Officer in charge.

Mr. A. KALESWARA RAO:—"May I know up to what age limit of children mothers are allowed?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"The answer gives the information, Sir."

Mr. A. KALESWARA RAO:—"Sir, there may be children of five or six years of age. Even such children are not to be with their mothers unless they happen to be seriously ill. Does it mean that?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"I think the answer is there, Sir."

Public Health

Construction of leper asylums in the Presidency.

* 756 Q.—Mr. BASHEER AHMAD SAYEED: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government are aware of the increasing number of lepers in the city of Madras and elsewhere;

(b) whether the Government have taken any steps for the prevention of a free intermingling of the lepers with healthy citizens and for their isolation, and if not, why not;

(c) whether the Government propose to extend the application of the Leper Act of 1898 to this Presidency and construct suitable asylums for the isolation of lepers and provide for their maintenance; and

(d) whether the Government propose to set apart a sufficient sum of money for the purpose of constructing leper asylums in the necessary localities from out of the Provincial remissions?

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A.—(a) No. According to the census report of 1921 there has been in the Presidency a decline in the number of lepers from 16,858 in 1911 to 15,753 in 1921 and in the City a decline from 272 to 228.

(b) & (c) The Government do not consider that the extension of the Act III of 1898 would serve any useful purpose, as recent investigations made regarding the degree of infection of leprosy in its various stages have shown that the provisions of the Act are out of date.

(d) No. The Government are considering the question of dealing with the early infectious cases so as to prevent the spread of the disease and cure the persons afflicted with it.

Mr. BASHEER AHMAD SAYEED :—“ May I know whether the Government will take any steps to prevent the vagabond lepers in the city of Madras from going about the streets ? ”

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—“ It is a matter for the police, Sir.”

Scarcity of drinking-water in Namakkal taluk.

* 757 Q.—Mr. BASHEER AHMAD SAYEED : Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health and the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government are aware that the ryots of Namakkal taluk in the district of Salem have been suffering from scarcity of drinking-water for the past five years ;

(b) whether the Government have received a memorial from the ryots of Namakkal recently regarding scarcity of drinking-water in the taluk, and whether the Government have investigated into the grievance of the ryots ;

(c) whether the Government have taken any steps to provide facilities for drinking-water to the ryots of the said taluk, and if so, whether the Government will be pleased to make a statement of the steps so far taken ;

(d) whether the Government propose to take such steps as may be necessary to permanently remove the scarcity of drinking-water from the taluk of Namakkal and whether the Government have considered any scheme therefor and if so, to place the same on the table of the House ;

(e) whether the Government has at any time considered the question of supplying water facilities to Namakkal by the construction of a channel from the Mettur dam, and if not, whether they propose to institute an investigation of the scheme ; and

(f) whether the Government have sunk any wells for relieving the scarcity of drinking-water in Namakkal, and if not, whether they propose to take steps to sink a sufficient number of wells at an early date ?

A.—(a) The Collector reported in January 1927 that there was scarcity of drinking-water in the taluk.

The Government are not aware that there has been a scarcity of water for the past five years.

(b) No memorial has been received from the ryots of Namakkal on the subject.